

FACULTY RECITAL

SUSANNE MENTZER, Mezzo-soprano

THOMAS JABER, Piano

JAMES DUNHAM, Viola

BENJAMIN KAMINS, Bassoon

DEBORAH HARTER, Speaker (guest)

Tuesday, October 19, 2010

8:00 p.m.

Lillian H. Duncan Recital Hall

Celebrating 1975-2010
35 Years

THE SHEPHERD SCHOOL OF MUSIC RICE UNIVERSITY

SONGS
WITH WORDS BY
CHARLES BAUDELAIRE

L'invitation au voyage Henri Duparc
(1848-1933)

Hymn Gabriel Fauré
(1845-1924)

Harmonie du soir Charles Martin Loeffler
(1861-1935)
James Dunham, viola

La Cloche fêlée Charles Martin Loeffler
James Dunham, viola

Je t'adore Alexander Grechaninov
(1864-1956)

L'invitation au voyage Emmanuel Chabrier
(1841-1894)
Benjamin Kamins, bassoon

INTERMISSION

Receuillement Claude Debussy
(1862-1918)

La Vie antérieure Henri Duparc

La Rançon Gabriel Fauré

La Mort des Amants Claude Debussy

La Mort des pauvres André Caplet
(1878-1925)

La Mort Alexander Grechaninov

BIOGRAPHIES

*Internationally acclaimed mezzo-soprano SUSANNE MENTZER has taught at The Shepherd School of Music since 2006 and continues to perform actively. Widely admired for her acting and as a specialist in trouser roles (Cherubino in **Le nozze di Figaro** and Der Komponist in **Ariadne auf Naxos**), she specializes in the operas of Mozart, Berlioz, and Richard Strauss. Professor Mentzer enjoys a significant concert and recital career, and is particularly interested in chamber music. She has been a guest artist at the Metropolitan Opera in leading roles since 1989. Recent engagements include the Metropolitan Opera's 125th Anniversary Gala, the world premiere of **The First Emperor** by Tan Dun with the Metropolitan Opera, and performances with the Chicago Symphony, New York Philharmonic, Toronto Symphony, Minnesota Orchestra, Santa Fe Opera, Florida Grand Opera, and Opera Colorado. Her recent chamber work took her to Music in the Vineyards (Napa), Music from Angel Fire, Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, Da Camera of Houston, and Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. Upcoming performances include **Hansel and Gretel** in concert with the San Diego Symphony, **L'heure espagnole** with the Houston Symphony, and roles with Houston Grand Opera.*

Professor Mentzer has appeared on four continents in nearly every great opera house and orchestra under the batons of R. Abbado, Bonyngé, Boulez, Chailly, Conlon, Sir Colin Davis, Sir Andrew Davis, Dutoit, Eschenbach, Haitink, Herbig, Järvi, Levine, Maazel, Mackerras, Marriner, Masur, Mehta, Muti, Ozawa, Salonen, Sawallisch, Slatkin, and Sinopoli, among others. Professor Mentzer cites as particularly inspirational Jean-Pierre Ponnelle and Giorgio Strehler. She can be heard on numerous recordings on Decca, Erato, Philips Classics, Telarc, Teldec, EMI, Koch, and International labels. She continues a long collaboration with pianist Craig Rutenberg. She has taught at DePaul University and the Aspen Music Festival.

Susanne Mentzer holds Bachelor and Master of Music degrees from The Juilliard School, and was trained in the Houston Grand Opera Studio. She studied with Rose Bampton and Norma Newton. She serves on the Board of Trustees of The W.M. Sullivan Foundation in New York, which supports young singers, and is a board member of the George London Foundation. She also regularly adjudicates the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and The George London Foundation Competition.

THOMAS JABER is Professor of Music and music director of the Rice Chorale. For over twenty years, he has coached singers, collaborated as pianist, organist, and harpsichordist in countless recitals with both faculty and students, and conducted chorus and orchestra concerts as well

as several operatic productions at Rice University and around the country. He was guest conductor in a large festival of choral music in the Sydney Opera House. He has also appeared in recitals and operatic programs on the Amalfi coast in Italy and in the Harbin, China International Festival. Mr. Jaber is a graduate of Arkansas State University, Indiana University, and the world-renowned Curtis Institute of Music where he was a member of the faculty from 1976-88. Mr. Jaber is the Director of Music and Organist at Houston's Chapelwood United Methodist Church.

Mr. Jaber was chosen as vocal coach for the Opera Company of Philadelphia/Luciano Pavarotti International Competition and also served as an Assistant Conductor of the Opera Company of Philadelphia. As a keyboard artist, he is the continuo organist on three recordings of cantatas by J.S. Bach with Helmuth Rilling, has performed as solo organ recitalist in Jerusalem's Church of the Redeemer, and for twelve seasons was the Principal Accompanist at the Fred Waring Summer Music Workshops. Mr. Jaber has recorded Schoenberg's **Five Pieces For Orchestra** with the highly praised Houston Symphony Chamber Players, under the direction of Maestro Christoph Eschenbach. He regularly accompanies the regional auditions of the Metropolitan Opera, as well as regional auditions for the San Francisco Opera Merola Program.

As a pianist, Mr. Jaber has appeared with many artists, including Andrea Jaber, William Murray, John Horton Murray, Joan Gibbons, Patryck Wroblewski, Jia Li, Gabriel Gonzales, Joyce Farwell, George Massey, Todd Miller, Katherine Ciesinski, Christine Ciesinski, Charles Austin, Stephen Varcoe, Virginia Dupuy, and Susanne Mentzer, in performances for the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, Dallas Opera Guild, and Da Camera of Houston. He recently recorded the Vivaldi **Four Seasons** as continuo harpsichordist with Houston's Mercury Baroque Ensemble.

Violist JAMES DUNHAM is active as a recitalist and guest artist. He has collaborated with such renowned artists as Emanuel Ax, Joshua Bell, Lynn Harrell, Cho-Liang Lin and members of the American, Cassatt, Guarneri, Juilliard, Takács, Tokyo, and Ying Quartets. An advocate of new music, he recently premiered and recorded two works by Libby Larsen – her **Viola Sonata** (2001) and **Sifting Through the Ruins** (2005) for viola, mezzo-soprano (Susanne Mentzer) and piano, due for release by Naxos. Summers are spent at festivals including Sarasota, Amelia Island (Florida), Aspen, La Jolla Chamber Music Festival, and le Domaine Forget (Quebec), with past participation in Festival der Zukunft (Ernen, Switzerland), the San Diego Mainly Mozart Festival, and three summers at the Marlboro Music Festival. Highlights of recent seasons included a pair of concerts with the Takács Quartet in Carnegie Hall, concerts in Reykjavík, Iceland, and returns to San Diego, San Francisco, New York, and Vermont, as well as regular engagements with Houston Friends of Music and Da Camera of

Houston. Other recording projects have included *Glyph* by Judith Shatin for solo viola with string quartet and piano, and the recently released Telarc recording of Tchaikovsky's *Souvenir de Florence* with the Ying Quartet and cellist Paul Katz.

Violist of the 1996 Grammy Award-winning Cleveland Quartet for eight years, James Dunham performed throughout North America, Europe, the Far East, and the Soviet Union. Founding violist of the Naumburg Award winning Sequoia String Quartet, he formerly taught at California Institute of the Arts, the Eastman School of Music, and the New England Conservatory, where he also chaired the String Department and received the Louis & Adrienne Krasner Teaching Excellence Award. Mr. Dunham is Professor of Viola and Chamber Music at The Shepherd School of Music where he directs the Master of Music in String Quartet program.

Since entering the world of professional music in 1972, BENJAMIN KAMINS has enjoyed a distinguished career as an orchestral musician, chamber and solo performer, and educator. During his nine years as Associate Principal Bassoon with the Minnesota Orchestra, Mr. Kamins appeared as soloist with that orchestra and taught at St. Olaf and Macalester Colleges. In 1981 he was appointed Principal Bassoon of the Houston Symphony. As an active recitalist and founding member of the Houston Symphony Chamber Players, his life in Houston remained diverse and his artistic presence deepened in the community. Faculty appointments came at the University of Houston and then at The Shepherd School of Music. Now as a Professor at the Shepherd School, Mr. Kamins continues his commitment to our young musicians and to classical music performance.

Mr. Kamins currently spends his summer teaching and performing throughout the United States. He holds faculty positions at the Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara, California, and the International Festival Institute at Round Top in Round Top, Texas. Both programs pair faculty chamber music performances with their highly regarded teaching programs. He is also Principal Bassoon of the Sun Valley Summer Symphony in Sun Valley, Idaho, a superb orchestra comprised of leading musicians from the nation's top orchestras. Other activities have included numerous festivals including Marlboro, Ravinia, Aspen, Pacific, Blossom, and Tanglewood. In addition to his Minnesota and Houston orchestral positions, he has served as a Guest Principal Bassoonist with the Pittsburgh Symphony, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the New York Philharmonic and the Boston Symphony.

In addition to his performing engagements, Mr. Kamins is in demand for master classes, recitals and chamber performances throughout North America. His interest in new music has led to a recent series of commissions and tours that serve to enrich the repertoire for the bassoon.

DEBORAH HARTER is Associate Professor of French Studies here at Rice University, where she teaches and does research in 19th-century French narrative, modern American and European short fiction, literature and psychoanalysis, and literature and philosophy. She holds a Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from the University of California at Berkeley, and has been the recipient of research fellowships from the Chancellor of the University of California, the American Council of Learned Societies, the American Association of University Women, Rice's Center for the Study of Cultures, and from the Andrew Mellon Foundation, funding that allowed her to spend two years at the University of Chicago as a Post-Doctoral Fellow in the Humanities. Dr. Harter has served as President of the Modern Language Association's Division on 19th-Century French Studies, and as the Speaker of the Rice Faculty Senate. She has twice been the recipient of Rice's Impact Award for her contributions to women, and was named, in 2008, Faculty Mentor of the Year by Rice's Student Association. She has also been awarded the Phi Beta Kappa Teaching Prize for Outstanding Teaching, three George R. Brown Prizes for Superior Teaching, and the Allison Sarofim Distinguished Teaching Professorship. She is the author of numerous articles, and of a book entitled *Bodies in Pieces: Fantastic Narrative and the Poetics of the Fragment*, published by Stanford University Press. Currently she is completing a study of madness and criminality in fiction, film, and art. It is entitled *Disorderly Portraits: Images of Excess from Balzac to Silence of the Lambs*.



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